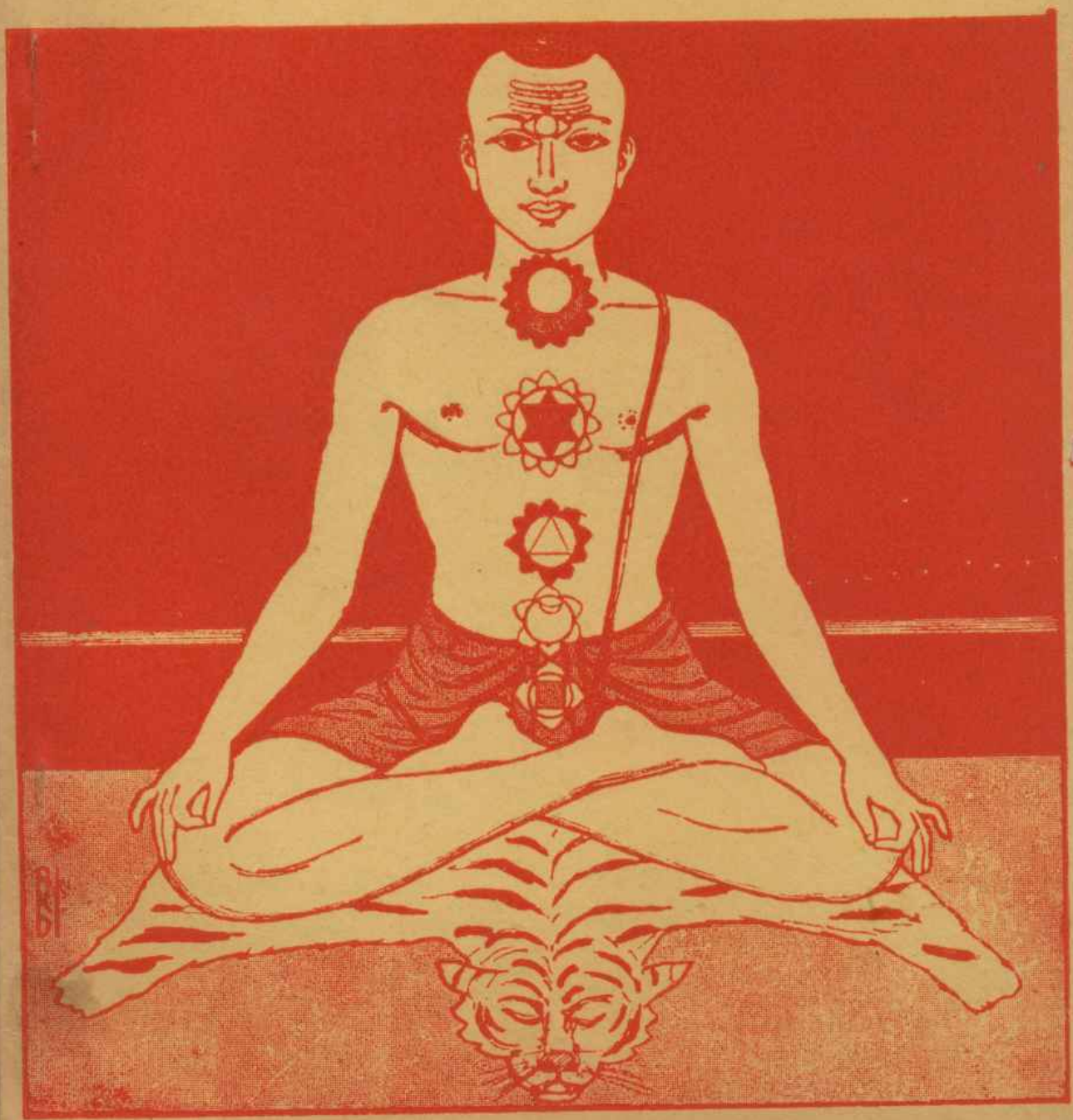
Agamokta

YOGA SADHANA



AGAMOKTA

YOGA-SADHANA

BY

'Kulagya' Swami Divyananda Saraswati 'Adhyatma-Jyoti',
Suratgiri Bunglow, Kanakhal (U. P.)

TRANSLATED BY

'Yoga-Martanda' Swami Jyotirmayananda Saraswati
Miami (Florida), U.S.A.

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PUBLISHED

out of the magnanimous donation of

Shri Bhagwati Lal Mathur

of Jodhpur

A word of gratitude

I am very much indebted to Swami Jyotirmayanandaji Maharaj of U. S. A. who has very kindly, translated my Hindi book 'Agmokta-Yoga-Sadhana' into English on my request. The translation presented is really very very beautiful and lucid. I have no words to express my gratitude to my Guru-Bhai Sri Swami Jyotirmayanandaji Maharaj for this trouble.

May the Mother Divine bless him with good health, long life and all success in life.

Swami Divyananda.

PRINTED AT

Bhrigu Press, Bai ka Bagh, Allahabad, U. P.

OM DURGAYAI NAMAH

This precious book is humbly dedicated
to the Sacred Memory **of**
Shri Prakash Roopji Rai

Whose soul attained the Lotus
Feet of Mother Divine
on the 14th June, 1981

PUBLISHERS NOTE

Our grateful thanks go to Shri Bhagwati Lalji Mathur of Jodhpur and his illustrious sons for sponsoring this edition in the mourn-ful memory of their son-in-law late Shri Prakash Roop Rai who passed away suddenly and untimely from the mortal body in a relaxed atmosphere in the year 1981 The members of this saintly family are ardent devotees of MA Shakti. They have also rendered immense service to their Divine Mother, Guru Deo and 'Kayastha Dharma Pracharak Mandali', Jodhpur both financially and physically. May the Divine Mother bless them all with Joy, Bliss, Health, Peace, Long happy Life and Divine Aishwarya.

Publishers.

A SHORT LIFE-SKETCH OF SHRI PRAKASH ROOP RAI

Shri Prakash Roop Rai was born on 8th April 1929 in Jodhpur in the respectable family of Kayasthas. He was a son of Shri Raghunath Roopji Rai. His grand-father was Shri Vijai Roopji Rai. His father was an officer in the Military Department of ex Jodhpur State. He lost his life in the young age untimely in a Car-Train accident on Rai-ka bagh Palace Railway level crossing gate.

Shri Prakash Roop Rai passed his Matriculation Examination from Sir Pratap High School, Jodhpur. Thereafter he joined Jaswant College, Jodhpur and passed his Intermediate & L.L.B. examinations. Then he took admission in the Engineerege. Bangalore and got his B. E. Degree in the year 1956.

Shri Rai was then appointed as an Assistant Engineer in the Rajasthan State Electricity Board, Jodhpur on 11th. September, 1956. He was promoted as an Executive Engineer in the year 1965. Thereafter he was again promoted as a Superintending Engineer on 6th. August 1977 at the age of 48 years. He got so many promotions in short time and earned name and fame for his intelegence and efficiency in work. He was a kind-hearted man. His personal life was exemplary. He loved his staff and workers under him.

Shri Prakash Roop Rai was a noble Soul, shining in selfsness and serving Mother Divine quitely and joyously. He was a silent devotee of MA Amba. He practised silent Sadhana and lead saintly life even in his day to day life. He studied many religious books. He always kept a balanced mind.

more devotion to his duty and regular Sadhana of his Mother Shakti. He was an absolutely self-made person who came up by his perseverance and industry. He was so honest that he never touched all the enormous income flowing to his feet from his independent and liberal profession of Engineering.

This world abounds with lazy peoples and a very few only relish hard work. Shri Praksh Roop Rai belongs to the latter category. He used to wake up early in the morning at 4 A.M. and after his daily routine he used to sit for Sadhana. And after that he sits to clear his official Dak. He used to sing the philosophical songs in the praise of Goddess Durga in his daily Satsang with Bhav and sincerity. His sincere qualities of works are beyond the description of my pen. He passed away silently and suddenly on 19th. June 1981.

His devoted partner Srimati Prakash Roop Rai is also a great devotee of Shakti. She always gives donations to the poors and charitable Ashramas and feed grass to cows & food to dogs in the morning. She used to go to temples for Deo Darshans.

May the Divine Mother bless Shri Prakash Roop Rai's departed Soul rest in peace in the Param Dham.

Govind Lal Mathur,
Kayastha Dharma Pracharak Mandali,
Naya Bass, Jodhpur.

A SHORT LIFE-SKETCH OF DONOR SHRI BHAGWATI LALJI SAHIB MATHUR OF JODHPUR

Shri Bhagwati Lalji Mathur was born on 15th. July, 1906 in Jodhpur in a well to do family of Kayasthas which had been well known for having blessed with many noble souls. His father Shri Panna Rajji Sahib was a noble and pious man possessed virtuous qualities such as self-less service, devotion to the Mother Divine, courage, self confidence and took great interest in moulding the character of his children in addition to giving them the right type of education.

Shri Bhagwati Lalji is a rich and wealthy man. He has quite a large family to support consisting of four sons and two daughters. He managed the marriages of his all the six children and gave high type of education to his all the four sons. His heart is very rich, very broad, it is the abode of magnanimity. This is the one devine trait—an extremely generous nature. He gives charity to poors and feed grass to cows. He daily goes to Guru Mandap, Lord Shiva's Temple, Devi Temples, and other temples too.

Shri Yamuna Duttji Maharaj of Guru Mandap initiated Shri Bhagwati Lalji into the Nawarna Mantra Diksha of MAA Durga. Since then he is repeating the Japa of this Mantra regularly. He used to participate in daily Satsanga in Guru Mandap with his Guru and his descendants. He has also trained the members of his family in Japa, Kirtan, Dhyan etc. He has transformed his house itself into a Vaikuntha and Kailasha.

Shri Bhagwati Lalji is a diligent Sadhaka, a great Bhakta who has disciplined himself under the guidance of Guru Man-

dap and moulded himself into an ideal spiritual aspirant. He conducts frequent Sankirtans in his house. He has realised that such Sankirtans and satsangs alone can bring liberation. He perhaps believes heart and soul in the Great Dictum :—

"Dhyan-Mulam Guror-Murtih,

Puja-Mulam Guroh Padam

Mantra-Mulam Guror-Vaakyam,

Moksha-Mulam Guroh Kripa"

[The Guru form should be m e citated upon ;

The Guru's feet should be worshipped ;

The Guru's words should be taken as Mantras :

as Gospel-truth ; and then the Guru's Grace will

Liberate you, will confer ha on you.]

ay the Divine Mother bless both Srimati and Shri Bhagwatilalji and his family with Health, Long life, peace, prosperity & Kaivalya.

Govindlal Mathur, Pradhan
Kayashtha Dharma Pracharak Mandali,
Naya Bass, Jodhpur

YOGA RESEARCH FOUNDATION

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Blessed Self

Adorations :

Many thanks for your kind letter of Feb. 9,82.

I was deeply moved to hear about the termination of the earthly existence of Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj.

He was a great friend of mine. While at Sivananda Ashram, I was in close association with Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj for about five years. He used to come to my classes on Yoga Vashishtha, Gita and other scriptures, and used to discuss philosophical matters. At times I would go to his Kutir, or he would come to my Kutir and hold interesting conversations.

He was very dear to Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj because of his wonderful qualities.

Swamiji was a personification of humility and simplicity. He had a special affection for me. Even after my coming to the West, he continued to send his books, write to me on various spiritual points and also gave appreciations for my Magazine and books Very recently I have received a type-written letter from him (on 31st Oct. 81) appreciating my book.—"Yoga Essays for self-improvement."

It is pleasing to know that he passed away from the mortal body in a relaxed atmosphere, and that thousands of devotees gathered to have the last Darshan of his sacred body prior to the ceremony of cremation.

I am further delighted to know that his book on Kundalini (translated into English by me) is going to be printed. Though Sri Swamiji is no more in his physical body, his invisible presence, the example of his magnanimous personality and his teachings will continue to inspire his devotees, disciples, friends and all humanity for a long time.
We have performed a special prayer and worship at our Ashram in Miami, Floride, as our humble offerings to the Divine spirit of Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj.

Sri Swami Lalitanandaji joins with me in expressing her sentiments of love and appreciation for the great soul of Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj.

Withregards Prem and Om.

Thine.
Sd. Swami Jyotirmayananda.

Feb. 24/82.

P. S. Your address has beea included in our freelist for International Yoga Guide. Here is a free rendering of the poem written by Shri Govind Lal Mathur :

O Guru—the Divine Preceptor !

O beloved soul—Swami Divyananda, today you have returned to Mani-Dweepa (the Heavenly world).

You have become the very likeness of Shiva Himself ; you have returned to the world of Lord Shiva.

O Beloved Swami Divyananda !

You incarnated in Samvat 1954 and you embraced the order of Sanyasa (renunciation) in Samwat 2010. Today you have passed on to the Heavenly World ; in Samvat 2038.

O Beloved Swami Divyananda !

You broke the fetters of delusion and attachments, you established relationship with Swami Shivananda (Your spiritual preceptor). Having renounced your family name Ram you became Divyananda, and began to abide in Kankhal.

O Beloved Swami Divyananda !

You have sung the glory of Jagadamba (the divine mother of the Universe) in various ways, You wrote many books, and secured immortality for yourself You have rendered your name immortal by singing the praises of shakti (the Goddess) through 'Shakti Suyash'.

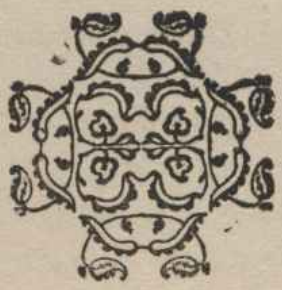
O Beloved Swami Divyananda !

On the sixth day of Mahi Navaratri, you silently left your body in Merta Road, and the drums sounded ahead Vaikunthi welcoming you.

O Beloved Divyananda !

May you shower your grace on your devotee—'Govinda' please hearken to my prayer. At the time of death, may I depart like yourself, may my pranas (vital force) leave my body without causing any pain.

O Beloved Swami Divyananda.



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INTRODUCTION

by Sri Swami Divyananda Saraswati

The Sanatan Arya Dharma (The Eternal Religion) of the Hindus is divided into two main parts : Nigama and Agama. Nigama refers to the Vedas, and Agama to the Tantras Vedas provide the theoretical basis, while the Tantras deal with the detailed practical basis of the scriptures. According to these scriptures there are four Yugas : Satya Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dwapar Yuga, and Kali Yuga. Every Yuga or age has its distinct characteristics, and accordingly different scriptures are highlighted in different Yugas. It is said,

कृते श्रुत्युक्त मार्ग स्यात् त्रेतायां स्मृति-सम्भवः ।
द्वापरे तु पुराणोक्त कलौ आगम-सम्मतः ॥

In other words, the Vedas show the way in Satya Yuga, Smritis in Treta Yuga, Puranas in Dwapar Yuga, and Agama (Tantra) in Kali Yuga. The reason is :

निर्वीर्या श्रौत-जातीया विष-हीनोरगा इव ।
आगमोक्त-विधानेन कलौ देवान् यजेत् सुधीः ॥

In Kali Yuga a wise aspirant should worship in accordance with the Agamas, because the Mantras of the Vedas become as ineffective in Kali Yuga as poisonless snakes.

There are three attitudes that are adopted in Upasana (devout meditation) based on Agama : Pashu Bhava (attitiude at the animal level), Vira Bhava (heroic attitude) andveDvy Bhava (divine attitude). On the first two attitudes, I ha givene

details in my book, "Yatra Tatra Sarvatra." The present book deals with the third attitude (Divya Bhava). Kundalini Yoga is included in this attitude. The practitioners of Kundalini Yoga are called Kaula. The term "Kaula" has been beautifully defined by the late eminent poet Sri Madhavaramji in his book "Shakti Bhakti Prakash" in the following manner :

कुल औ अकुल दोऊ मेलवे की रीति जाने।
ताको नाम कौल शिव ग्रन्थन में गायो है।
महानन्द मंगल प्रह्लादनन्द विश्वनाथ,
नन्द चिदानन्द ज्येष्ठनाथ हू बतायो है॥
विश्वेश्वर पृथ्वीधर लघु विद्यारण्य पुनि,
नाम कुलाचार्य एते जग में कहायो है।
ऐसो कौल पर्म धर्म ताके परे धर्म नाहिं,
तामें एते कौलकान पर्म पद पायो है॥

In other words, the aspirant who knows the method of awakening Kundalini Shakti that abides in "Kula" (Muladhara Chakra), and uniting it with Akula (Sahasrara Chakra) wherein Lord Shiva abides, is called Kaula. The names of important Kaulas are also mentioned in this verse. Sri Swami Vidyaranya is among them. Readers must be acquainted with Sri Swami Vidyaranya who is the famous author of "Panchadashi"—a well-known work of Vedantic philosophy.

Sri Swami Vidyaranya was a great devotee of the Goddess. During his time, by the grace of Goddess, he performed a miracle—he brought down a shower of gold from the

heavens in the country of Karnataka, to the amazement of people. The above-mentioned poet talks about that event in the following lines of his poem :

तू ही महा-विद्या विद्यारन सों प्रसन्न भई,
तेरी ही कृपा से विद्यानगर बसायो है।
मैं तो गुण पाठक हौं फाटक कृपा को खोल,
जंसे करनाटक में हाटक बरसायो है॥

(O Goddess, thou art Maha Vidya—great knowledge. It is by Thy grace that Vidyaranya was able to establish a Vidyanagar city. You rained down gold in Karnataka in order to please your devotee. I am a seeker of your grace, may You shower your grace on me.)

The speciality of Agama Shastra (Tantra) consists in the fact that the spiritual disciplines that are enjoined in this are the giver of both—Bhoga (enjoyments) and Moksha (release from the world-process). On the other hand, the instructions of the Vedas do not blend Bhoga and Moksha. Those who are desirous of Moksha (liberation), they must renounce Bhoga (enjoymcnt of the world) ; and those who seek Bhoga, they must abandon Moksha. Lord Shankara while talking about the stories of liberation to his consort Parvati, says,

यत्रास्ति भोगः न च तत्र मोक्षः,
यत्रास्ति मोक्षः न च तत्र भोग.।
श्रीसुन्दरी - सेवन - तत्पराणां,
भोगश्च मोक्षश्च करस्थ एव॥

It is the livelihood of the soul in the redemption of the sou d this is the simple path of Preya (pleasant) and Shreya (attainment of liberation). This is called Nivritti in Pravritti (renunciation in action). According to this, it is not necessary to renounce all enjoyments and to abide in the solitudes of the forests for practising rigorous austerities. The aspirants who are endowed with Yama and Niyama (restraints and observances) and Sadhana Chatushtaya (four qualifications of an aspirant : discrimination ; dispassion ; six-fo.d qualities of serenity, control of senses, endurance, renunciation of egoistic actions, faith and tranquility ; and aspiration for Self-realization) they can practise Yoga unceasingly whether they stay at home or abide in forest ; they are bound to succeed.

I will request the aspirants who are bent upon attaining success on the spiritual path to maintain a spiritual diary as outlined by my Guru, Bhumandaleshwar Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. This diary has been included in the appendix of the book.

I declare without any hesitation that I owe to the spiritual diary for whatever success I have gained on the spiritual path. I have been maintaining the diary, sending it regularly to Sr Gurudeva for his observation, and accordingly I have been bringing changes in my Sadhana (spiritual discipline). I am confident that sincere seekers who will follow this diary along with their spiritual practices will gain immense benefits, and in the course of time will attain Self-realization.

In conclusion, I pray to wise readers that whatever error in printing and literature might have been left in this book, they may please acquaint me of that, so that in future editions proper corrections will be made.

जानामि धर्मं न च मे प्रवृत्तिः,
जानाम्यधर्मं न च मे निवृत्तिः ।
त्वया हृदन्त-स्थितया परेशि,
यथा नियुक्तोऽस्मि तथा करोमि ॥

(I know Dharma but my inclination towards it is lacking. I know what is Adharma but I cannot refrain myself from it. With You, Goddess, abiding in my heart, I do as You prompt me to do.)

—0—

APPRECIATION

Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaja belongs to the class of highly advanced saints and scholars. His studies are profound and so is his Sadhana. He is an authority on the philosophy of Mother-worship (Shakta Siddhanta) being himself a supreme worshipper of the Goddess. Goddess Saraswati abides in his pen.

This book, "Yoga Sadhana" is the 12th flower from the garland of his literature. Maintaining the profundity of the subject, he has expounded Kundalini Yoga and related subjects in accordance with the scriptures in such a simple style that even the general masses will be highly benefited. I am confident that the aspirants will receive proper guidance from this rare book written by Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj, and will be able to quench the thirst for their spiritual knowledge. I am sure that like other books by the author, this book too will become popular among the spiritual readers.

During the twentieth century, when man is becoming an enemy of man, and when demoniac qualities are triumphant

in all directions, there is tne need of bringing about a new awakening and a new consciousness. There is the need of proving the true worth of the fundamental eternal values of our culture in the set up of the present day world. This task can be accomplished only by saints and sages who live their life above personal interests, unaffected by selfishness. They live for doing good to all. They are dedicated to the ideals of "Sarva Bhuta Hite Ratah" (engaged in doing good to all), and "Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah" (May all be happy). Towards this goal, this book is a new step advanced by such a saint.

My heart-felt good wishes are ever with Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj !

Swami Chidananda
President
Divine Life Society

Shivananda Nagar
(Rishikesh) June 1973

—0—

PROLOGUE

by Swami Jyotirmayananda

This present work is a gem among spiritual writings that deal with the subject of Sadhana or spiritual discipline. Brevity is the artistic beauty of the writings of Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj. He is direct to the point, clear and lucid in his exposition, and yet, profound in his wisdom of Tantra Shastra.

This was the famous statement of H. H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj that, "An ounce of practice is better

than tons of theory." This fact is the predominating feature of this book. Herein, Sri Swami Divyananda, the illustrious author of many similar books on Tantra Shastra and related subjects, has given insight into Kundalini Yoga the mystic implication of the root-letters, the secrets of Mantra, the technique of Japa, practice of Asana and Pranayama, the method of adoring the deities that preside over the chakras of Kundalini, the nature of liberation and the means of attaining it and other related subjects.

Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj is a devotee of Parashakti (the Divine Mother) and, as such, devotion to the Divinity in Mother aspect is the underlying theme in this book. In the final analysis, Parashakti and Shiva (the Absolute) are one. In the relative plane, the Divine Mother assuming the role of Prakriti guides the soul to supreme Brahman through the roads of Bhoga (enjoyment) and Moksha (release).

Devotion to Goddess enables an aspirant to feel and experience the compassionate Hand of the Mother behind every event of life. Devi or the Goddess assumes a deluding aspect for those who are in the lesser planes of evolution, who have not yet been drawn to the higher values of life, and are therefore entangled in gross enjoyments of the world. She deludes them in such a way that they ignorantly believe that their transitory life is eternal, that their impure physical body is the pure spirit, that the painful enjoyments of the world are blissful, and their inert mind and intellect are the conscious Self. This deluding aspect of the Mother is called Avidya or ignorance.

The compassionate Mother awaits the return of every one of her children, or individual souls, from the world-process, and even while Her delusive force has its sway, Her compassion towards every one of Her children is unfailing. There is a great significance in the force of delusion. If the dazzling truth were revealed to the less advanced, it would be detrimental for them, even as the vision of the dazzling sun is detrimental to the weak eyes of man.

No matter how far one may wander in the forest of the world-process, one is never far away from the Divine Mother —one is ever enfolded in the arms of the Divine Mother. When a baby sleeping in the arms of the mother has unpleasant dreams, he wakes up to see his mother smiling and realizes that he has been all the while rocked by his compassionate mother ; but he does not know this until he wakes up. In the same way, every soul is being held in the compassionate Hands of the Goddess ; and though She is closer than one's very heart, yet the deluded souls experience a separation from the Mother through the long dream of Samsara (the world-process).

Those who are pure at heart, who have turned away from the world-process, the seekers of the Nectar that drizzles from the Sahasrara at the crown of the head, the spiritual aspirants after liberation, in them the Goddess manifests Her Vidya aspect. This aspect of knowledge unveils the myriad beauties of the Supreme, and reveals the profundity of Divine Glory in every object of the world. The patient effort with which Mother in the form of Prakriti (Nature) works for the awakening of the soul from the world-process is indescribable. No word can express better the patience of the Divine

Prakriti than the significant word "Mother." Therefore all Devi-Upasakas or Mother-worshippers have tender love and regard for the Supreme in the form of Mother. Devi worship is as old as the human instinct for the love of mother.

It is the Mother who manifests as Kundalini Shakti ; and as She ascends the mystic path of Sushumna, an aspirant continues to experience increasing expansion of consciousness, until the Kundalini Shakti joins with Shiva, the Supreme Self, at the crown of the head. Then the aspirant attains Self-realization wherein the sorrows of the world cease forever, and there arises the experience of unending bliss.

Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj gives an integral approach for the awakening of Kundalini and for receiving the grace of the Divine Mother by combining the spiritual disciplines in the form of Asanas and Pranayamas of Hatha Yoga, Meditation exercises of Raja Yoga, self-surrender and Mantra Japa of Bhakti Yoga, and the enquiry into the nature of the Self by Jnana Yoga.

I am immensely pleased to have translated this book from Hindi into English. It is my good wishes and prayers to God that Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj may continue to serve humanity for a long time, and may this book illumine the mystic path of spiritual aspirants !

—0—

PREFACE

by Vyakhyan Kesari Pandit Bhojraj Shastri,
Sri Pith Bhavan, Jodhpur

"Apama Somamrita"—Somarasa is that mystic nectar, drinking which, many have crossed the ocean of the world-process ; and many continue to cross it. Books written by great men are indeed Somarasa which illumine the path of Shreya (blessedness) for the seekers after Self-realization.

Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj is among such divine and highly elevated Mahatmas (Sages) whose books can guide the spiritual aspirants on the path of blessedness. Those who are desirous of seeking spiritual progress should study and reflect upon his teachings. This book, "Yoga Sadhana" has been written by him after profound studies in this subject. His unique style of writing has rendered even difficult subjects of Yoga and philosophy delightful to study. This book contains the description of Kundalini Yoga in accordance with the principles of Agamas and Nigamas, secrets of Mundamala (the garland of skulls), the method of repetition of Mantra, and other profound subjects based upon his own experiences. The glorious advantages of the practice of Yoga and the nature of liberation have been written with such surprising simplicity that, guided by this book, even ordinary persons can attain the knowledge of Self and become Jivanmuktas (liberated in life).

In the Appendix of this book, he has presented the profound subjects of Shakti Tatwa in inspiring songs ; he has verily "placed the ocean in a little jar." He is the knower of the secrets of Shakti Siddhanta (the philosophy of Mother-

worship). This book, "Yoga Sadhana" is one of the foremost books dealing with Kundalini Yoga. It is not an easy matter to bring the secrets of Sanskrit scriptures in a simple language that can be understood by general masses. People in modern times are naturally disinclined to practice spirituality, and at the same time, they are unable to get such saints or great souls, or books written by them, by which they could work out the betterment of their own souls. This book of his will prove to be a true Guru and guide. This is my firm belief ; because, the path that is expounded and taught in a selfless manner is bound to be good and helpful for all general masses—"Paropakaraya Satam Vibhutayah."

Having studied this book from beginning to end, and then having reflected upon its teachings, an aspirant is bound to experience spiritual awakening. Let an aspirant realize this fact by himself.

I offer my good wishes towards the spread and propagation of this wonderful book, "Agamokta Yoga Sadhana."

OTHER BOOKS WRITTEN BY ADORABLE SWAMI DIVYANANDAJI MAHARAJ

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DEDICATION

This book is respectfully dedicated
to the lotus hands of
Brahmaleena His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and his disciple Adorable Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, the president of "Divine Life Society," Shivananda Ashram Rishikesh, Himalayas.

Author

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Do you want good health ?
Do you want to attain long life ?
Do you want to render your intellect sharp and subtle ?
Do you want to enjoy a life of peace and bliss ?
If you say, "Yes," then practise the methods outlined in this book.

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"By repeated effort even a dull-witted person becomes wise and intelligent. By the constant friction of rope, there arises a groove even in a rock. He who seeks, enters the depths and discovers—But alas ! I continued to seek in the shallow waters of the bank."

If you practise repeatedly with firm resolve, you will surely receive the Grace of the Divine Mother !

—**Author**

KUNDALINI YOGA

by Sri Swami Divyananda Saraswati
translated by Swami Jyotirmayananda

The word Yoga means union. In other words, it is the process of uniting one object with another. From the spiritual point of view, Yoga is the process of uniting the individual soul with the supreme Self. Kundalini Yoga is that process by which Jiva (individual soul) is united with the Siva (the Absolute Self). It is said in the scriptures:

देहो देवालयः प्रोक्तं जीवो देव सदाशिवः ।
त्यजेदज्ञान-निर्माल्यं, सोहं-भावेन चिन्तयेत् ।।

In other words, our body is a temple of God, and it is Siva, the Supreme Self, who abides in it in the form of Jiva (the individual soul). Having removed the veil of ignorance, the Jiva must discover its essential nature (Siva) by meditating upon the significance of the mantra, Soham ("I am That"). What is the Soham mantra ?

हकारेण बहिर्जाता, सकारेण प्रवेशिता ।
हंसः हंसः इति मन्त्रेण, जीवो जपति सर्वतः ।।
नानया सदृशा विद्या, नानया सदृशो जपः ।
नानया सदृशो मन्त्रः, न भूतो न भविष्यति ।।
अजपा नाम गायत्री, योगिनां मोक्ष-दायिनी ।
यस्या सङ्कल्प-मात्रेण, नरः सायुज्यमाप्नुयात् ।।

With the sound Ha, the breath goes out. And with the sound Sa the breath comes in. Thus, unknowingly, a person

continues to recite Hamsah Hamsah. This is called Ajapa Japa. This name implies that it is a form of Japa (repetition of Mantra) that continues constantly without conscious repetition. This is also termed Shwasa Japa, repetition of Mantra by associating it with breath. During one day and night, a normal person breathes twenty-one thousand six-hundred times. Therefore, it is suggested that a person should repeat two hundred malas of his Ishta Mantra. Since one mala consists of 108 beads, the 200 multiplied by 108 results in 21,600. The purpose of this is that not even a single breath should go in vain. Every day is lived with a divine purpose. This Ajapa Japa is included in Manasic Japa (mental repetition of mantra). Further, an aspirant should offer a certain definite number of mantra repetition unto the lotus hands of every god who presides over the Chakras of Kundalini.

षट्-शतं गणनाथश्च, षट्-सहस्रं पितामहे ।
षट्-सहस्रं गदापाणि, षट्-सहस्रं पिनाकिने ।
सहस्रं आत्मने दद्यात्, सहस्रं परमात्मने ॥
सहस्रं गुरवे दद्यात्, एतत्संख्या समर्पयेत् ॥

In other words, six hundred mantras are to be offered to Ganapati (Lord Ganesha) who presides over Muladhara (basal plexus). Six thousand mantras are to be offered to Brahma (the creator), who presides over Swadhishthana Chakra; Six-thousand mantras are to be offered to Lord Vishnu, who presides over Manipura Chakra (solar plexus); six thousand to Lord Rudra, who presides over Anahata Chakra (the cardiac plexus); one-thousand mantras to Jivatma (the individual soul), who presides over Vishuddhi Chakra; one-

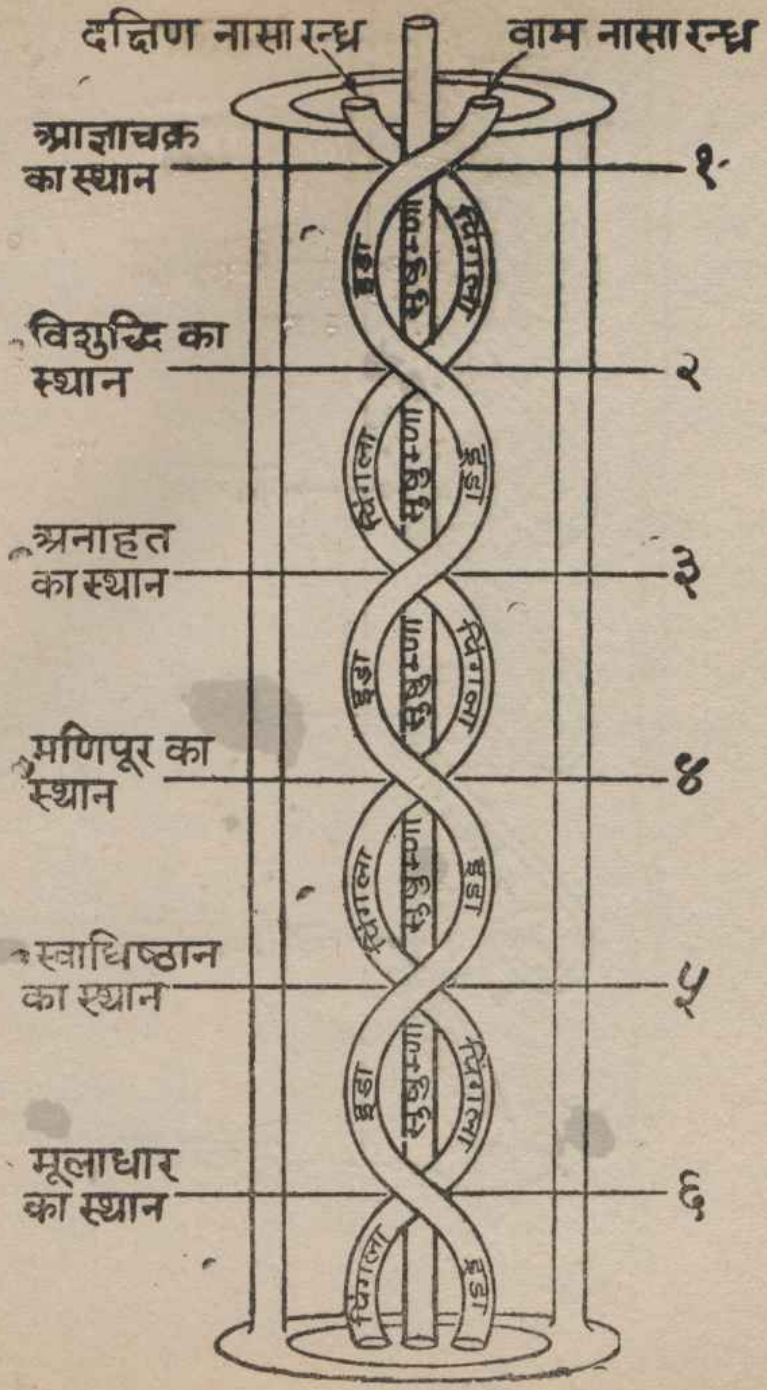
thousand mantras to paramatma (the Supreme Self), who abides in the Ajna Chakra ; the last one-thousand mantras are offered to the Guru (the supreme preceptor in the form of the Absolute Siva) in Brahmarandhra (Sahasrara Chakra) presided over by Siva, the Absolute (Self) : thus totalling 21,600 Mantras.

Japa (repetition of Mantra) is of three types : 1. Vachak (vocal), 2. Upanshu (semi-verbal) and 3. Manasic (mental). Similarly, sound or speech is of three types : 1. Vaikhari (expressed through the vocal chords), 2. Madhyama (unexpressed subtle sound), and para (sound at the basal centre, called transcedental Sound). These three types of sound correspond to the three types of Japa. Kundalini Shakti is the mother of all sounds and words. This mystic energy is symbolized by the form of a snake with three and one-half coils , seated in the Muladhara Chakra.

This Kundalini is called Vakvadini Shakti (the origin of all sounds) because all sounds arise from Kundalini Shakti. This Shakti (energy) rules over the entire pindanda (the microcosm in the form of the human personality.) It continues to lie in Muladhara with its head downwards. In other words, as long as a person is attached to the objects of the world, the Kundalini is sleeping. When he turns his mind away from the objects of the world, and directs it to the divine Self, Kundalini raises its head upwards.

When a snake charmer plays upon a flute-like instrument, the sleeping snake raises its hood, straightening its body like a stick. In the same way, by the practice of Asanas and pranayama, a Yogi awakens the Kundalini Shakti and directs

Illustration No. 1



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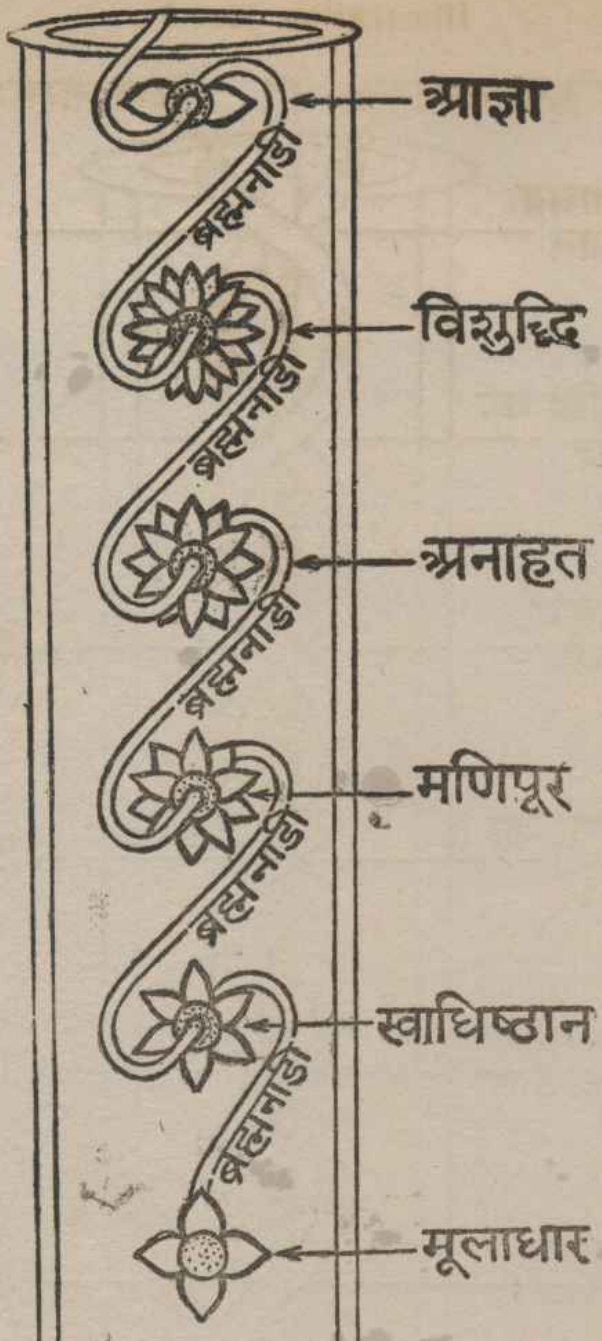

it upwards. Devotees awaken Kundalini by Japa. Those who follow the path of meditation awaken Kundalini by the practice of meditation. Thus awakened, Kundalini ascends, piercing all the Chakras until it reaches the crown of the head, where it is united with the supreme sun (the Absolute Self).

There are six Chakras : Muladhara, Swadhishthan, Manipur, Anahata. Vishuddhi, and Ajna. Brahmarandhra or Sahasrara is above all these Chakras. It is the Supreme Abode where Supreme Shiva abides along with his shakti (dynamic energy). When the pranas act upon Kundalini at Muladhar, a hole opens in Sushumna (within the spine). Kundalini enters the Sushumna along with the pranas. Piercing Brahmagranthi (in Swadhishtan), Vishnugranthi (in Manipur) and Shivagranthi (in Anahata) it reaches Ajna Chakra. Then a yogi begins to "drink nectar." In Ajna Chakra, Ida, Pingala, and Sushumna, the three Nadis (vital channels) form a junction. This is also called Triveni, or a confluence of three mystic rivers.

In fact, there are 72,000 Nadis in the body. Of these three are important : Ida, Pingala, and Sushumna. Ida commences from the sole of the left foot and reaches the crown of the head, passing through the Ajna Chakra. Pingala starts from the sole of the right foot and reaches Brahmarandrha through Ajna Chakra. Sushumna is situated within the spine. It commences at Muladhar, and reaches Sahasrara (crown of the head) through Ajna Chakra. Thus, the three unite at the Ajna Chakra. When a Yogi leads Kundalini to Bramarandhra at the crown of the head, and unites it with Shiva, he begins to "drink the nectar" that flows from the lotus feet of the Supreme Shiva.

This gives rise to supreme Bliss. All his sufferings come to an end, and all his desires are fulfilled. This is the state of Nirvikalp Samadhi. This is indeed Liberation.

Every Chakra has a definite location, a certain number of petals, a colour, letters that symbolize their vibrations, a presiding deity, and a dynamic aspect of the deity (Shakti). This is shown as follows :

CHAKRA	SEAT	No. OF PETALS	COLOR	LETTERS	PRESIDING DEITIES	SHAKTI
Mūlādhār	base of spine	4	blood red	Vam Sham Sam Sam	Ganapati	Shākinī
Swādhishthān	root of generative organ	6	yellow	Vam. . .Lam	Brahmā	Kakini
Manipur	navel	10	blue	Dam. .Pham	Vishnu	Lakini
Anāhata	heart	12	red as the rising sun	Kam. . .Tham	Rudra	Rākinī
Vishuddhi	throat	16	smoky	Am. . .Ah	Individual Soul	Dākini
Ājnā	between eye-brows	2	lightning	Ha. . .Ksha	Supreme Self	Hākinī

It is important to note that the raising of Kundalini will be possible only by a Yogi who is endowed with the four-fold means of Liberation : Viveka (discrimination), Shat-sampat (Six-fold virtues—Serenity, Control of Senses, Endurance, Renunciation of selfish actions, Faith, and Tranquility) and Mumukshuttwa (burning aspiration for Self-realization). Further, he must follow the path shown by his Guru in order to attain success. Spiritual Yoga Sadhana (Yogic discipline) is a very subtle and mysterious subject. This demands the destruction of all the thought waves of the mind.

"YogashChitta-Vritti-Nirodhah" ("Yoga is the cessation of the thought waves of the mind."). This is the statement of Sage Patanjali, the exponent of Raja-Yoga. Kundalini-Yoga and Raja-Yoga lead to the same goal. Knowledge of Yoga is a spiritual science. It is the best of all forms of knowledge. It is the knowledge that belongs to Sattya Yuga (the age of purity). Therefore, for people in Kali Yuga who are short-lived and dull of intellect, this Yoga is, if not impossible, difficult. Many believe that Yoga is not meant for the householders. There is a popular saying in relation to this. The bodies of people who practise Yoga on the basis of mere imitation become emaciated and diseases multiply. This is, however, entirely wrong. If that were so, Sri Krishna would not have spoken about the glory of the practice of Yoga to Arjuna :

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी, ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः ।
कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी, तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

meaning, "A Yogi is greater than an ascetic, even greater than a man of wisdom. He is greater than one who performs ritualistic Karmas. Therefore, O Arjuna, become a Yogi."

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THE SECRET
OF THE
GARLAND OF SKULLS

The scriptures portray Goddess Kali with a garland of skulls around her neck. Now, the question arises, are these human skulls ? No. The goddess was adorned with the garland of skulls even before the creation. How could she then have found human beings from which to collect skulls ? Rather, the skulls represent the fifty letters of the Sanskrit alphabet. The garland of these letters is the *Munda Mala* (garland of skulls) of the Goddess. Goddess *Kali* is "seated" in an individual human being in the form of *Kundalini Shakti* (the mystic power represented by a sleeping serpent curled in three and a half coils).

The fifty letters of *Devanagari* script (the script of Sanskrit grammar) denote the frequencies of the lotus petals related to the Chakras of Kundalini. When the petals of the Chakras are closed, it symbolizes the human tendency to be externalized. But when a person performs the Japa (repetition) of these letters, the petals are said to unfold, and the sleeping *Kundalini* rises and moves towards *Sahasrara* (at the crown of the head) through the path of *Sushumna* (the mystic channel in the spinal column). As a result of this, *Shiva* and *Shakti* unite at *Sahasrara*, and an aspirant enjoys supreme bliss.

The world is expressed by names and forms. These are indicated by the alphabet. When Mother Kali destroys the world, She withdraws them into Herself. During creation, there is projection of sound. This sound exists in *Muladhara* (basal center) in the form of *Para Vani* (transcendental speech) The

same sound expresses itself in the form of *Pashyanti* (subtle speech that can be seen only with a Yogic vision) at the *Manipur Chakra*. With further unfoldment, the sound assumes the form of *Madhyama* (in between the expressed and unexpressed states of sound) at the *Anahata Chakra*. Finally, the sound expresses itself in the form *Vaikhari* or expressed sound through the throat. This is the external form of sound.

Vak refers to speech or the light of sound. The meaning of *Vak* refers to *Kala* (aspects), *Tatwa* (reality), and *Bhuvana* (the worlds). *Vak* and meaning go to create all that is. This is the garland of the alphabet that symbolizes creation and adorns the Goddess in the form of a garland of skulls. It dissolves during *Pralaya* or dissolution of creation. Therefore, for gaining an insight into mystery of creation and dissolution, the scriptures have enjoined the practice of *Ajapa* Japa which has been described in the previous topic. Referring to this mystic knowledge, *Sri Kabira* says :

माला फेरत युग गया, पाया न मन का फेर ।
कर का मनका छांड़ि के, मन का मनका फेर ॥

"Ages pass while turning the beads of Mala, but there is no change in the mind. Give up turning of beads by the hand, and commence turning the beads of the mind."

The same wisdom relating to unity of sound and meaning is expressed by the great poet *Sri Kalidas* :

वागर्थाविव सम्पृक्तौ, वागर्थ-प्रतिपत्तये ।
जगतः पितरौ बन्दे, पार्वती-परमेश्वरौ ॥
ॐ ह्रौं स्हौं शिव आदि-गुरुभ्यो नमः ।

"I adore Goddess *Parvati* and the Supreme Divinity—*Lord Shiva* who are inseparably related to each other like word and its meaning..."

The garland of skulls on the neck of Goddess *Kali* is nothing but a garland of alphabetical letters in which abide the *Kundalini Shakti*. The folloing verse reveals the same fact :

आधारे लिंग-नाभौ हृदय-सरसिजे तालु-मूले ललाटे ।
द्वि-पत्रे षोडशारे द्विदश-दश-दले द्वादशार्धे चतुष्के ॥
वासान्ते वाल-मध्ये ड-फ-क-ठ सहिते कण्ठ-देशे स्वराणां ।
हं-क्षं तत्वार्थ-युक्तं सकल-दल-गतं वर्ण-रूपं नमामि ॥

"The following letters abide in *Muladhar* : *Vam, Sham, Sam Sam.* In *Swadhishthana* there are these letters : *Bam, Bham, Mam, Yam, Ram* and *Lam.* In Manipura at the navel : *Dam Dham, Nam, Tam, Tham, Dam, Dham, Nam, Pam, Pham.* In *Anahata* at the heart : *Kam, Kham, Gam, Gham, Ngam, Cham, Chham, Jam, Jham, Nyam, Tam, Tham.* In the throat center (*Vishuddhi Chakra*) there are these : *Am, Aam, Im, Eem, Um, Oom, Rim, Rrim, Lrim, Lrrim, Am, Aim, Om, Aum, Ang, Ah* And in *Ajna Chakra* (between the eyebrows) there abides *Kundalini Shakti* in the form of *Ham* and *Ksham.* To that *Kundalini Shakti* I offer my adorations ! "

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THE TECHNIQUE OF PRACTISING JAPA

WHAT IS *JAPA* ?

Repeating any Mantra (sacred formula) or Name of God again and again is called Japa. In this Kali Yuga Japa is an easy but effective method for attaining God-realization. Japa is a vital part of Yoga. In the Gita Lord Krishna says to Arjuna : "Yajnanam Japa-Yajnosmi"—"I am the sacrifice of Japa among all sacrifices."

One attains peace, bliss and immortality by the practice of Japa. Japa must be practised with purity, love and faith. All psychic powers can be attained by the practice of Japa.

What is the difference between Japa and meditation ? Repeating a Mantra again and again is Japa, and reflecting upon the essential form and the qualities of God or one's Ishta Devata (chosen Deity) is called Dhyana (meditation). Meditation is practised with Japa as well as without Japa. In the beginning one should practise meditation with Japa. As we progress on the path of meditation, Japa begins to diminish more and more. In the end meditation alone remains. This is the advanced state.

The Name is inseparable from the Divinity who is named. Word is inseparably related to the idea of the mind. When we repeat the Mantra of our Ishta Devata, we should maintain the form of the Deity before our mental vision. Thus, Japa and meditation go hand in hand. They are inseparable.

While performing Japa, we must feel that our Ishta Devata (the chosen aspect of Deity) is listening to our prayer, and is casting His compassionate gaze at us. Eurther, He is bestowing on us fearlessness (Abhaya Dan) by His open hands. We should develop love and devotion in our heart as if the Divinity is present before us.

MANTRA JAPA

(Repetition of Mantra)

Repetition of Mantra is an exact science. "Mananat Trayate Iti Mantrah."—"That is Mantra by reflecting upon which one becomes free from the bondage of birth and death." In other words by reflecting upon the Mantra or by reciting or uttering it again and again, one attains the four-fold purpose of human existence : Dharma (ethical value), Artha (material value), Kama (vital value), and Moksha (spiritual value of life). Mantra is a divine force. Mantra is verily the Deity. An aspirant should seek communion with his Ishta Mantra as much as possible. As his effort increases, the power of Mantra unfolds and assumes the form of Sadhana Shakti—the power of spiritual discipline.

It is by Sadhana Shakti (the power of spiritual discipline) that an aspirant awakens the Mantra from its apparent slumber. Mantra is a collection of letters or syllables. It is a mass of effulgent energy. It awakens extraordinary psychic powers. It generates the power of creation. Mantra gives rise to Taan (absorption). The Mantra consciousness which is hidden in a Mantra decomes revealed by the practice of Japa. By taking recourse to the practice of Japa, the impurities of the mind (desire, anger, greed, etc.) are removed. Just as with the removal of dust from a mirror, one is able to see one's face clearly in it, in the same way, when the impurities are removed from the mirror of mind, one can discover the true nature of the Self clearly.

Just as soap cleanses the impurities of a cloth, in the same way, Mantra removes the impurities of the mind, and renders

it pure. One should practise repetition of the Divine Name, or one's Mantra every day with faith, feeling and divine love. By the practice of Japa, all sins are destroyed and endless bliss and peace are experienced.

Japa is of three kinds: 1. Vachaka (loud utterance of Mantra), 2. Upamshu (whispering utterance of Mantra), and 3. Manasic (mental utterance of Mantra). Of these three, mental Japa is the best, Upamshu is of a medium nature, while verbal or Vachaka type is the lowest.

VARIOUS TYPES OF SOUND (Dhwani)

Word or sound exists in the form of sound-vibrations. It creates a definite form. Every word or sound creates a form in the ether plane of the world. Groups of sound go to create intensified forms.

Present scientists have evolved experiments which prove that sound generated by special instruments give rise to geometrical designs. It is said that when Madam Finlang of France sang a hymn in honour of the Virgin Mary, there appeared a form of her holding the baby Jesus in her arms. A student from Bengal who was studying in France recited Bhairava Stotra (hymn in praise of God Bhairava), and there appeared the form of Bhairava riding on his vehicle—dog. According to the science of music of our country, every Raga or Ragini (musical mode) has a distinct form. For example, Vasanta Raga (the musical mode of spring) is portrayed as a youth adorned with flowers. All these go to prove the following points :

(1) Word or sound goes to create forms.

(2) Special sounds give rise to special forms.

While practising Mantra Japa, it is important to pronounce the letters of the Mantra clearly. In our Mantra Shastra (scriptures dealing with Mantra) different Mantras are used for pleasing different Deities. By repeating Mantra, a form of the corresponding Deity is created in the mind. Then the mind continues meditating upon the form. This is the reason that Mantra is described as the Deity Himself. Guru (spiritual preceptor), Mantra, and Ishta Devata—these three are apparently separate from each other, but in fact, they are mystically the same reality. Mantra is received through a Guru. It is like the son of Guru. And Mantra gives rise to Ishta Devata (one's chosen deity). Therefore, Ishta Devata is like the son of the Mantra. Figuratively speaking, Guru is the father of the Mantra, and the grandfather of Ishta Devata. Therefore, Tantra Shastra speaks of Guru's glory in the follwing hymn :

ध्यान-मूलं गुरु-मूर्तिः, पूजा-मूलं गुरु-पदं ।
मन्त्र-मूलं गुरु-वाक्यं, मोक्ष-मूलं गुरु-कृपा ।।

In other words, whatever meditation, whatever worship, and whatever Mantra one takes recourse to, the root of all is the Guru or the spiritual preceptor. Therefore, it is only when Guru's grace is secured, that a person can attain liberation.

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AGAMOKTA YOGA SADHANA

by Sri Swami Divyanand Saraswati
translated by Sri Swami Jyotirmayananda

ASANAS AND PRANAYAMAS

(Physical Poses and Breathing Exercises)

Part 1

By the practice of Asanas (physical poses), the body and mind are both rendered healthy. Virasana, Padmasana, Siddhasana, and Sukhasana—these four are general poses that can be practised by anyone easily :

Virasana (heroic pose) : Place the right foot on the left thigh, and the left foot under the right foot.

Padmasana (lotus pose) : Place the right foot on the left thigh, and the left foot on the right thigh. Keep the hands on the knees. Maintain the spine, neck and head in a straight line and sit firmly.

Siddhasana (perfect pose) : Bring the heel of the left foot near the anus, and the right foot at the root of the generative organs. Let the ankles of both feet adjust with each other. Place the hands on the knees.

Sukhasana (comfortable pose) : We (in India) sit cross-legged while taking food. Sukhasana is crossing your legs in any comfortable manner.

By the practice of Asanas (poses) and Pranyamas (breathing exercises for controlling the Pranas or subtle vital forces), the nerves are strengthened, and the mind becomes peaceful. Physical and spiritual strength is enhanced. Body and mind become bright. Cheerfulness lights up one's face.

Part 2

Just as food and drink are necessary for life, in the same way—and even more so—we need air. A person can subsist without food for several months, and without water for only a few days, but without air he cannot live even for a moment. It is this air which is also known as Prana. Mahatma Gandhi expressed his views on food, saying: "The first important food is air (Prana). The second is water, the third, fruit, flower, root, etc., the fourth is milk, and the fifth is cereals such as wheat, rice, etc."

Air is indeed most important for our life. This air continues to function in our body through constant inhalation and exhalation. We continue breathing while eating, drinking, sitting and standing, during the day or during the night, in every moment of our life, whether knowingly or unknowingly. When the breath stops even for a moment, we become restless. If the breath is kept suspended with force, we can die as well.

According to the scriptures, a human being breathes 21,600 times during a day and night. In other words, he breathes 15 times in a minute. Air comes in and goes out for 15 times in a minute. It is true that when a person runs, practises exercise, during sex-indulgence, or during mental agitation, his breathing becomes more rapid, and he begins to pant.

The air goes into the lungs. There are minute cells in our lungs. When we breathe in, the air goes into tiny lung cells. As a result of this, the cells swell. When we breathe out, the air returns outside, and the cells contract. The coming in and going out of the air, followed by expansion and

contraction of the cells of the lungs, continues all the time. Therefore, pure air continues to enter in and out of the body, purifying the blood, and energizing it.

We should always breathe through the nostrils. It is unhealthy to breathe through the mouth. Breathing through the mouth may cause various diseases such as cough, asthma, etc. While sleeping, walking, running, doing vigorous exercises, the mouth must be kept closed. Sleeping in the open air, walking where the air is pure—these are very important and beneficial for health. By taking deep and long breaths, we bring in more and more pure air within, and allow more of impurity to be expelled from the body. Our blood receives an abundant supply of oxygen, and consequently it is purified. This engenders fresh energy and vitality in us, and prolongs our lives.

This is the reason that the writers of the scriptures have enjoined the practice of Pranayama for prolonging life. Prana is energy. It is the sustainer of life. In general, there are five types of Prana : 1) Prana, 2) Apana, 3) Samana, 4) Vyana, and 5) Udana. But it is one Prana that assumes these different names due to different functions. Breathing is the simple form of absorbing Prana. It is Prana that forms a link between the subtle and the gross body. The eye, ear, and other senses operate on the basis of the Prana. Prana continues to operate even while a person sleeps, when the mind and senses are withdrawn. Prana is an invaluable energy. One must use this energy with great care.

Prana must be conserved and promoted. Prana is spent while thinking, desiring, shaking the body, walking and speaking. Prana is supplied by food, water, "fire" and air·

By purifying and increasing the vital fluid (Virya) in the body, Prana is considerably enhanced. Prana, mind and vital fluid (Virya) are intimately related. If Prana is controlled, the mind will be controlled easily. An aspirant should cultivate an abundant supply of Prana by the practice of Pranayama. Control of Prana is called Pranayama. Inhalation of breath called Puraka. Exhalation is called Rechaka and retention of breath is Kumbhaka. Pranayama can be helpful for every person. In the beginning, one must practise mild Pranayama consisting of inhalation and exhalation.

EXERCISES

Exercise One

a. Sit in any comfortable pose. Keep the head, neck and body in a straight line. With your right thumb, close the right nostril. Through the left nostril inhale as long as you can do so comfortably. Then exhale as slowly as you can. Repeat this six times. This is one cycle.

b. Press upon your left nostril with the help of your right ring and little fingers. Keeping the right nostril open, inhale through it slowly as much as you can, and then exhale slowly. Do this six times.

Exercise Two

Inhale comfortably through both nostrils. Then exhale slowly and completely. Do not retain the breath inside. Do this six times. This is one cycle. Perform three to four cycles every day.

Exercise Three

With your right thumb close the right nostril and inhale through the left nostril. Then, immediately pressing upon the

left nostril with the help of the little and ring fingers of the right hand, and keeping the thumb off, breathe out through the right nostril slowly. Do not retain the breath internally. Then breathe in through the right nostril slowly, and breathe out through the left nostril. Do this six times, alternating the nostrils. This is one cycle. You may perform three to four cycles daily.

Exercise Four

After practising the above type of Pranayama for some time, start retaining the breath as long as you can in a comfortable manner. The retention of breath is called Kumbhak. Draw the breath in through the left nostril very slowly. Then retain the breath as long as you can do so comfortably. Then breathe out as slowly as you can through the right nostril. This is followed by breathing in through the right nostril, retaining the breath comfortably, and breathing out through the left nostril very slowly. This is one cycle.

Continue alternating the breath. Follow with the use of the same fingers as described before. This is called Sukhpurvak Pranayama (comfortable alternate breathing exercise). Gradually increase the number of cycles according to your capacity. In this Pranayama, the ratio of duration between inhalation, retention and exhalation is of 1: 4: 2, which can gradually be increased up to 16-64-32. Do not retain your breath beyond your capacity. In the beginning try to maintain this ratio. As your practice matures, the ratio will be maintained automatically.

While inhaling, retaining and exhaling the breath, continue to repeat your Ishta Mantra mentally. Pranayama must be practised on an empty stomach during the morning hours.

The place or room wherein you practise Pranayama must be well-ventilated. Do not practise Pranayama in closed rooms. During the very hot days, do not practise Pranayama. If you perspire during Pranayama, do not use a towel or a piece of cloth to wipe perspiration off your body. Rather, rub your body with the hands. This renders your body light and firm. By the practice of Pranayama, you will enjoy cheerfulness, keen appetite, health, strength, beauty, sharp intellect, and lustrous body.

Advantages of the Practice of Yoga

1. The subtle desires of the illusory world that have been generated in the mind through numerous embodiments cannot be destroyed without the practice of Yoga for a prolonged period of time. It is impossible to control the mind without practising Yoga for a long time in accordance with methods and laws prescribed in the Yogic scriptures.

2. Without Yoga, the wisdom that gives Liberation cannot arise. On the other hand, practice of Yoga without pursuing wisdom will be insufficient to lead one to Liberation. Therefore, an aspirant must practise Yoga and Jnana (Yogic disciplines joined with the quest for knowledge) for attaining Liberation.

3. During Yogic Samadhi, the "fire" of Yoga rising from the navel ascends to the region of the head, where it melts the "nectar" that abides in Brahmarandhra (the crown of the head). A Yogi drinks this nectar with great relish and joy. Having drunk this nectar, a Yogi can sustain himself without food and drink for several months.

4. Through the practice of Yoga, the body becomes healthy and strong. Obesity is removed. The face shines with spiritual lustre. The eyes glitter like diamonds. The countenance of the practitioner becomes charming. His speech becomes sweet and melodious. He becomes free from diseases. He begins to hear the mystic sound known as Anahata (the unstruck music emanating from the heart-center). He becomes established in the practice of Brahmacharya (celibacy). His vital fluid becomes firmly established in the body. His digestive fire becomes keen. His Nadis (nerves and channels of Pranic energy) become purified. The distractions of the mind are removed. Consequently, he experiences one-pointedness of mind. The light of spirituality shines forth. The mind enters into supreme peace.

Special Instructions

1. During the summer season, practise Yoga only once during the morning. If you feel heat in your head, apply Amla Oil on the head. Drink water blended with some sugar candy. Your body will become cool.

2. Too much eating and drinking, too much speaking, keeping company with friends, etc., are opposed to the practice of Yoga. Yoga is not for him who eats too much, nor for him who fasts too much. Add a small amount of ghee (clarified butter) to your food, along with Dal and Bhat (pulse soap with cooked rice in an Indian style). This will give softness to the intestines. Adopt Mitahara (moderate eating) so that the stomach does not feel a sense of heaviness after food).

3, Without the practice of Brahamcharya and diet control, you will not gain much from Yoga exercises. Be regular in

your spiritual Sadhana (disciplines). Do not neglect them even for one day. But if you fall ill, you must not practise Sadhana. On recovery, resume Yoga practice.

4. If you want to awaken Kundalini by the practice of Asanas (physical poses) and Pranayamas (breathing exercises), you should try to acquire purity of mind, speech and action.

5. Do not waste your vital fluid (Virya). Keep your senses and mind under control. Practise spiritual discipline while you are young. When you become old it will be difficult for you to take up the practice of serious spiritual disciplines.

6. A well-regulated life, study of scriptures, good association, repetition of Mantra, meditation, Sattwic and moderate diet, daily introspection, spiritual enquiry, good conduct, practice of Yamas and Niyamas (ethical restraints and observances), austerity and devotion to God — by the practice of these, one attains success in course of time. Most people spend their lives in an unregulated, uncontrolled, and disbalanced manner. This is why they find it difficult to move towards the real goal, and they fail in their effort of attaining Self-realization.

7. Exercise your reason at all times when you practise spiritual discipline. If a certain type of spiritual practice does not agree with your nature, you should change it, having consulted your Guru. This is reasonable. It is by using Yukti (reason), that you gain Siddhi (success in Yoga), Bhukti (enjoyment) and Mukti (liberation). After a period of sustained practice, you will yourself know how to use your reason and practical sense.

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THE NATURE OF LIBERATION AND ITS ATTAINMENT

Generally it is asked, "What is liberation or Moksha? Is liberation a concrete development such as the attainment of a son or other material objects?" In fact, liberation is not a material gain Moksha (liberation) implies the absolute cessation of all miseries, and the attainment of supreme bliss. Yo Vai Bhuma Tat Sukham — "That which is unconditioned, therein lies Bliss." It is to be experienced by intuitional realization.

You may ask: "Is there any special characteristic by which this Bliss can be recognized?" Yes, this Bliss is very sweet. Is it as sweet as milk? Definitely so, but much more. Is it as sweet as milk mixed with sugar? No, it is much sweeter than that. Is it, then, like the sweetness of milk blended with sugar and curd? No, no, it is even more than that.

Is it, then, like the sweetness of milk, curd, and ghee (clarified butter) blended together? Not even that; it is indeed much sweeter than that. Is it like the Panchamrita — the blend of five ingredients: sugar, milk, yoguri, ghee, and honey? Not so.

The bliss of Bhuma (the unconditioned Self) is beyond compare. It is all-pervading like the sky. It is indescribable Bliss. It is also described as the "Bliss of the Self." The attainment of this Bliss is the goal of human existence. Then where is this Bliss? This Bliss lies within ourselves. It cannot be found in the external world.

Now the question arises, how can this Bliss be obtained? The human body is mainly constituted of two ingredients; gross and subtle. Five organs of action, five senses, and the body — all these put together should be considered as the gross

aspect of the world-process. Mind, intellect, Chitta (sub-conscious) and ego go to constitute the subtle aspect of the world-process. Mind is the mediator between the gross and the subtle, and unites the two. If a person were to learn the secrets of the mind, and attain mastery over the mind, then with the help of this mind, through his purified intellect, he would be able to reach the innermost Self. Having reached that, he would be able to enjoy the Bliss of Self. This is liberation.

The scriptures have spoken about four types of liberation according to the types of aspirants ; 1. Salokya (abiding in the realm of God), 2. Samipya (abiding in the vicinity of God), 3. Sarupya (abiding with the similar form of God), and 4. Sayujya (united with God). For attaining the highest goal o human life, one must convert the outgoing tendency of the mind into an ingoing tendency. For bringing this about, t is the need of practising the external as well as internal means of spiritual discipline (Sadhana).

Bahiranga Sadhana (External Means)

Yama (restraints), Niyama (observances), Asana (meditative poses), Pranayama (control of Pranas by breathing exercises) — these are called external means. Yama includes : Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (celibacy), and Aparigraha (non-covetousness). In other words, one must abandon these five : violence, falsehood, stealing, loss of sex-energy, and Parigraha (possessing things beyond one's need). This abandonment must be practised through the mind, speech and action. Shauch (purity), Santosh (contentment), Tapa (austerity), Swadhyaya (study of scriptures), and Ishwar-pranidhana (surrender to God) — these are the Niyamas (observances).

By the practice of Yamas and Niyamas, the senses are controlled, and by the practice of Asanas and Pranayamas, the natural fickleness of the mind is overcome, and concentration of mind is promoted. Gradually, as the mind enters into a stage of one-pointedness, it becomes increasingly internalized or in-going. Then the internal means in the form of Pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses). Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation) and Samadhi (superconsciousness) are practised.

Antaranga Sadhana (Internal Means)

Pratyahara : Turning the senses away from the objects with repeated effort is known as Pratyahara (control of the senses). It consists of checking the externalized tendency of the senses.

Dharana : The one-pointedness of the Chitta (mind-stuff).

Dhyana : Reflecting upon an object with a one-pointed mind is called Dhyana or meditation. When Dharana (concentration) becomes intense and firm, it is called Dhyana or meditation. Generally, concentration and meditation are practised on the centers at the navel, heart, or between the eyebrows.

Samadhi : Intensive meditation is called Samadhi (superconsciousness). There is no awareness of the "triad" in Samadhi. Meditator, meditation, and object of meditation—or knower, knowledge and the knowable -- these three become one. This is the state of supreme knowledge, supreme bliss, and supreme peace. Herein the soul becomes one with the Divine Self. This is the unity of Jiva (soul) and Shiva (the Divine Self). All the desires terminate in this subleim state. Ego and mind are destroyed from their very root. This is the highest summit of supreme peace and luminous wisdom.

This subject is of a serious nature. Therefore, it needs to be explained more lucidly.

Due to the Samskaras (Karmic impressions) of numerous lives, every human being is driven by a forceful desire for enjoying the objects of the world. This desire is the cause of bondage. With the rise of Viveka (discrimination) and Vairagya (dispassion), when the mind turns away from the enjoyments of the objects, then the desire of man rises beyond the world and the worldly objects, and becomes transformed into an intense longing for attaining the Divine Self. This is called Shubhechha or good aspiration. This leads to liberation.

An aspirant desirous of attaining liberation practises meditation on the Self by directing his mind inwards. He first focuses his mind on Om, the symbol of the Self (with form as well as without form). By attaining firmness in a meditative pose, and by the persistent and regular practice of Pranayama, he awakens Kundalini Shakti (the mystic energy that expresses through desire, will, action, and wisdom). Kundalini lies dormant in Muladhara (the space between the generative organs and anus). When awakened, it begins to ascend upwards. An aspirant begins to experience a unique type of bliss.

By regular practice, this Kundalini Shakti reaches Swadhisthana (at the root of the generative organs), and then piercing through Manipura Chakra (at the navel), it reaches Anahata Chakra (at the heart). Then an aspirant experiences Salokya Mukti (like abiding in the realm of God). When Kundalini ascends up to Vishuddhi Chakra (at the throat), he experiences Samipya Mukti (like being in the vicinity of God). When this energy rises up to Ajna Chakra (between the eyebrows), he

experiences Sarupya Mukti (like being similar to God). But when the Kundalini reaches Brahmarandhra (at the crown of the head), he experiences Sayujya Mukti (complete union with God).

This is the abode of Supreme Shiva. Having reached this, the soul in the form of Kundalini Shakti becomes one with Shiva, the Supreme Self. This is the liberation of the Jiva. This is the unity of Jiva and Shiva. This is the state of supreme bliss. Having reached this state, an aspirant drinks the nectar of immortality. This is his supreme goal. He who has reached this state of Samadhi is a Jivan-Mukta (liberated in life).

When an aspirant is not in Samadhi, he becomes active in this practical world, or roams without attachment. He does not possess the limited sense of actorship. He is neither elated by favourable conditions, nor is he depressed by adverse circumstances. He is ever balanced in mind, and detached. He cannot be bound by any Karma. All his actions (accumulated and current) are destroyed like burnt-up seeds. The Prarabdha or fructifying Karma alone remains. Even this Karma ends with the death of the body. Having shed his physical body, he attains Videha Mukti (disembodied liberation). He is not born again. He attains the state of absolute freedom (Kaivalya).

Those aspirants who, though they continue to practise concentration and meditation, are unable to reach the state of Samadhi, also gain immense benefits. They develop mental peace, radiant health, cheerfulness, patience, retentive memory, perseverance and other qualities. These are always skilled in action and courageous.

It is very important to receive the grace of the mother on the spiritual path. When the Goddess Mahamaya is pleased,

she leads the aspirant to Shiva or the Supreme Self, and thus, to liberation. Therefore, an aspirant should practise constant devotion and meditation towards the Mother of the universe.

WORSHIP OF THE DEITIES PRESIDING OVER THE SIX CHAKRAS

In this worship there is no need for offerings of incence. flowers, etc., as are needed for external forms of worship. In this worship the root-letters of the elements become the materials for worship. For example, the root letter, "Lam" is the symbol of the earth element and represents the incense. "Ham" is the root letter of the ether element and is symbolic of flowers. "Yam"" is the root letter of the air element and symbolizes Dhup (aromatic material). "Ram" is the root letter of fire, and stands for the offering of light. "Vam" is the root letter of the water element, symbolizing Naivedya (offering of food). Here follow the Mantras with the help of which the Deities at the Chakras are propitiated.

MULADHARE

Guda-Chakre Chaturdal-Kamale Vam Sham Sam Sam Rakta-Varna-Yute Tatra Sthitaya Ganpataye Shakini-shakti-Sahitaya Lam Prithwi-tatwatmakam Gandham Samarpayami; Ham Akash-Tatwatmakam Pushpam Samarpayami; Yam Vayu-tatwatmakam Dhupam Samarpayami; Ram Agni-Tatwat-makam Dipam Darshayami; Vam Amrit-Tatwatmkam Nai-vedyam Samarpayami. Shad Shat (600) Ajapa-Japam Sam-arpayami.

(At the Chakra situated near the anus, with four petals with their root letters : Vam Sham Sam Sam, of red colour, I adore Ganapati—Lord Ganesha with the divine Shakti Shakini. I offer the incense of the earth element with the root letter Lam, the flower of ether element with the root letter Ham,

the Dhupa of air element with the root letter Yam, the light of the fire element with the root letter Ram, and nectar of the water element with the root letter Vam. I am offering 600 repetitions of Ajapa-japa).

SWADHISHTHANE

Linga-Sthane Shat-Dal-Kamale Bam Bham Mam Yam Ham Lam Pita-Varna-yute Tatra Sthitaya Brahmane Kakini-shakti-Sahitaya Lam Prithwi-tatwatmakam Gandham Samarpayami; Ham Akash-Tatwatmakam Pushpam Samarpayami; Yam Vayu-Tatwatmakam Dhupam Samarpayami; Ram Agni-Tatwatmakam Dipam Darshayami; Vam Amrit-Tatwatmakam Naivedyam Samarpayami. Shat-Sahasra Ajapa-Japam Samarpayami.

(At the Chakra situated at the root of the generative organs, with six petals with their root letters, Bam, Bham, Mam, Yam, Ram, and Lam of yellow colour, I adore Lord Brahma with the divine Shakti Kakini. I offer the incense of the earth-element with the root letter Lam, the flower of the ether element with the root letter Ham, the Dhupa of air element with the root letter Yam, the light of the fire element with the root letter Ram, and the nectar of the water element with the root letter Vam. I am offering 6000 repetitions of Ajapa-japa).

MANIPURA-CHAKRE

Nabhi-Sthane Dash-Dal-Kamale Dam Dham Nam Tam Tham Dam Dham Nam Pam Pham Nila-Varna-yute Tatra Sthitaya Vishnave Lakini-Shakti-Sahitaya Lam Prithwi-Tatwatmakam Gandham Samar-payami; Ham Akash-Tatwatmakam Pushpam Samarpayami: Yam Vayu-Tatwatmakam Dhupam Samarpayami; Ram Agni-Tatwatmakam Dipam Darshayami; Vam Amrit-Tatwatmakam Naived yamSamarpayami. Shat-Sahasra Ajapa-japam Samarpayami.

(At the Chakra situated at the navel region, with ten petals with their root letters Dam, Dham, Nam, Tam, Tham, Dam, Dham, Nam, Pam, Pham of blue colour, I adore Lord Vishnu with Lakini Shakti. I offer the incense of the earth element with the root letter Lam, the flower of the ether element with the root letter Ham, the Dhupa of the air element with the root letter Yam, the light of the fire element with the root letter Ram, and the nectar of the water element with the root letter Vam. I am offering 6,000 repetitions of Ajapa-Japa).

ANAHATA-CHAKRE

Hridaya-Sthane Dwadash-Dal-Kamale Kam Kham Gam Gham Ngam Cham Chham Jam Jham Iyam Tam Tham Aruna-Varna-yute Tatra Sthitaya Rudraya Rakini-Shakti-Sahitaya Lam Prithwi-Tatwatmakam Gandham Samarpayami; Ham Akash-Tatwatmakam Pushpam Samarpayami; Yam Vayu-Tatwatmakam Dhupam Samarpayami ; Ram Agni-Tatwatmakam Dipam Darshayami ; Vam Amrit-Tatwatmakam Naivedyam Samarpayami. Shat-Sahasra Ajapa Japam Samarpayami.

(At the Chakra situated at the heart, with 12 petals ; Kam, Kham, Gam, Gham, Ngam, Cham, Chham, Jam, Jham, Iyam, Tam, Tham, of vermillion colour, I adore Lord Rudra with the divine Shakti Rakini. I offer the incense of the earth element with the root letter Lam, the flower of the ether element with the root letter Ham; the Dhupa of the air element with the root letter Yam; the light of the fire element with the root letter Ram, and the nectar of the water element with the root letter Vam, I am offering 6,000 repetitions of Ajapa-Japa).

VISHUDDHI-CHAKRE

Kantha-Sthane Shodash-dal-Kamale Am, Aam, Im, Eem,

Um, Oom, Rim, Rrim, Lrim, Lrrim, Am, Aim, Om, Aum, Ang, Ah, Dhumra-Varna-Yute Tatra Sthitaya Jivaya Dakini Shakti-Sahitaya Lam Prithwi-Tatwatmakam Gandham Samarpayami; Ham Akash-Tatwatmakam Pushpam Samarpayami; Yam Vayu Tatwatmakam Dhupam Samarpayami; Ram Agni-Tatwatmakam Dipam Darshayami; Vam Amrit-Tatwatmakam Naivedyam Samarpayami. Sahasramekam AjapaJapam Samarpayami.

(At the Chakra situated at the throat, with sixteen petals : Am, Aam, Im, Eem, Um, Oom, Rim, Rrim, Lrim, Lrrim, Am, Aim, Om, Aum, Ang, Ah, of smoke colour, I adore the Soul with divine energy Dakini. I offer the incense of the earth element with the root letter Lam, the flower of the ether element with the root letter Ham, the Dhupa of the air element with the root letter Yam, the light of the fire element with the root letter Ram, and the nectar of the water element with the root letter Vam. I am offering 1,000 repetitions of Ajapa-Japa).

AJNA-CHAKRE

Bhrikuti-Sthane Dwidal-Kamale Ham, Ksham, Vidyut-Varna-yute Tatra Sthitaya Paramatmane Hakini-Shakti-Sahitaya Lam Prithwi-Tatwatmakam Gandham Samarpayami; Ham Akash-Tatwatmakam Pushpam Samarpayami; Yam Vayu-Tatwatmakam Dhupam Samarpayami; Ram Agni-Tatwatmakam Dipam Darshayami; Vam Amrit-Tatwatmakam Naivedyam Samarpayami. Sahasramekam Ajapa-Japam Samarpayami.

(At the Chakra situated at the region between the eyebrows, with two petals with their root letters : Ham and Ksham, of the colour of lightning, I adore the Supreme Self along with the Divine Energy Hakini. I offer the incense of the earth element with the root letter Lam; the flower of the ether element with the root letter Ham ; the Dhupa of the air element with

the root letter Yam; the light of the fire element with the root letter Ram, and the nectar of the water element with the root letter Vam. I am offering 1,000 repetitions of Ajapa-Japa).

PRAHMA-RANDHRE

Sahasra-dal-Kamale Ananda-Matrika-Karpur-Varna-Yute Tatra Sthitaya Gurave Yakini-Shakti-Sahitaya Lam Prithwi-Tatwatmakam Gandham Samarpayami; Ham Akash-Tatwatmakam Pushpam Samarpayami; Yam Vayu-Tatwatmakam Dhupam Samarpayami; Ram Agni-Tatwatmakam Dipam Darshayami; Vam Amrit-Tatwatmakam Naivedyam Samarpayami. Sahasramekam Ajapa-Japam Samarpayami.

(At the Chakra situated at the crown of the head with a thousand petals that include all the root letters, of camphore white colour, I adore the Divine Guru along with the driving energy Yakini Shakti. I offer the incense of the earth element ith the root letter Lam, the flower of the ether element with the root letter Ham ; the Dhupa of the air element with the root letter Yam ; the light of the fire element with the root letter Ram, and the nectar of the water element with the root letter Vam I am offering 1,000 repetitions of Ajapa-Japa.)

GURU-MANTRA

1. Om Hamsah Shiva Soham
2. Om Hsaum Shaum Shiva Adi Gurubhyo Namah.

Hamsa or AJAPA GAYATRI MANTRA

Om Hamsaya Vidmahe Parama-Hamsaya Dhimahi Tanno Hamsah Prachodayat.

PARAMAHAMSA MANTRA

Om Soham Hamsah Paramahamsah Paramatma Chinmayoham Satchidananda-Swarupoham Soham Brahma Om.

DEDICATION OF JAPA

Six hundred are to be dedicated to Lord Ganesha; six tho-

usand to Lord Brahma; six thousand to Lord Rudra; six thousand to Ishan Rudra; one thousand to the Individual Self; one thousand to the Supreme Self, and one thousand to the spiritual preceptor.

By practising mental worship according to the procedure described above, Kundalini Shakti is awakened. Before the awakening of Kundalini, an aspirant encounters dense darkness, and finds his Sadhana distasteful. But he should not give up his practice due to boredom or anxiety. In a short time, Kundalini will be awakened, and the aspirant will begin to see divine colours such as yellow, red, blue and others, and there will be increasing experience of bliss. Then he knows that he is progressing on the path with certainty.

APPENDIX

AJAPA-JAPA AND KUNDALINI-SONG

(1)

I direct my mind to the holy feet of Sadguru. I wake early in the morning when three parts of the night are over. Having washed hands and feet, and having brushed the teeth, I sit in a steady pose for the practice of meditation.

I direct my one-pointed mind to the thousand petalled lotus in the crown of the head, and while drinking the nectar I adore the Supreme Shiva along with his divine energy.

I bow my head to Ganapati, Brahma. Vishnu, Shiva, Jiva and Isha, and offer flowers of the five elements to the Deities that preside over the Chakras. I offer to the Deities their respective Mantras. In total I repeat Mantras for twenty-one thousand, six hundred times.

I repeat the Mantra "Hamsah Hamsah, Soham, Soham." with every breath. Thus says, 'Divya,' I practise mental worship for attaining the Supreme Goal.

(2)

She is the giver of liberation. She is the Goddess Kulakundalini. First center is Muladhara, with its four letters : Vam, Sham, Sam and Sam with four petals, of a red colour, where Ganesha abides, the giver of auspiciousness. Next to Muladhara, adore the Goddess at Swadhisthana with the root letter Vam, the six petalled lotus, and presiding Deity, the four-faced Brahma.

Manipura is situated at the navel, having ten petals shining with a blue colour, containing the letters from Da to Pha. where Lord Vishnu, the consort of Lakshmi, abides.

The fourth Chakra is Anahata, with twelve petals situated in the heart, of vermilion colour, containing letters from Ka to Tha, where Lord Shiva, the destroyer of the demon Tripura, abides.

At the region of the throat, there is Vishuddhi Chakra with the sixteen-petalled lotus, of smoky colour containing letters from UM to AHA where Jiva abides.

At the middle of the eyebrows, there is the two-petalled lotus: Ajna Chakra containing root letters Ham and Ksham of lightning colour, the seat of the Supreme Self.

The thousand-petalled lotus of camphor white colour shines at the crown of the head, where Shiva abides along with Shakti, and the devotee drinks the nectar proceeding from the feet of the deities. The bliss is beyond all imagination.

Awaken Kundalini Shakti, let this mystic energy pierce the Chakras in the Sushumna, and join with Shiva at the Sahasrara.

'Divya' says, learn this technique from the spiritual preceptor. Thus do I implore—Kula Kundalini is the Goddess. She is the giver of liberation.

SPIRITUAL DIARY

1. How many hours did you sleep ?
2. When did you get up from bed ?
3. Did you bathe and perform other purificatory actions ?
4. How long did you practise exercises and Asanas, etc. ?
5. Did you go for a walk in the morning or evening ?
6. How long did you perform worship, study of scriptures, etc.?
7. How many Malas of Japa (repetition of Ishta-Mantra)?
8. How long in Kirtan or Satsang (good association) ?
9. How long did you study religious books ?
10. How long in contact with saints and sages ?
11. How many times did you write Mantra ?
12. How long did you observe Mauna (silence) ?
13. How many Vratas (fasts and Jagarana vigils) ?
14. How much did you give in charity ?
15. How many times did you speak lies, and what self-punishment did you give ?
16. How many times did you become angry, and what self-punishment did you give ?
17. How long did you waste in empty amusements and gossips ?
18. How many times did you falter in Brahmacharya ?
19. What evil habit are you trying to eradicate ?
20. How long did you spend in practising selfless service ?
21. How many Pranayamas did you perform ?
22. How many hours did you spend in meditation ? (on the personal deity or impersonal Absolute)
23. How many verses of the Gita did you study and commit to memory ?
24. When did you go to sleep ?

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. On a long sheet of paper draw columns for writing a spiritual diary. Write these 24 points and mention the dates of the month. Maintain the diary every day. The diary must be written every day in the evening. Do not postpone writing the facts of the day for a few days later.

2. The subjects of the diary may be altered to suit one's circumstances.

3. You should not hesitate to mention your weaknesses and failures.

4. You should receive guidance for removing your doubts and for correcting your mistakes from your Guru or a spiritual well-wisher (an advanced aspirant). Bring changes in your Sadhana according to an expert's guidance.

5. Reference No. 20 : On Sundny or on any other holy-day, you may give some of your time for serving any social work or a religious center, as will be of help to humanity.

6. Reference No. 11 : This aids success in the practice of concentration and meditation.

7. Reference No. 12 : This aids the conservation of physical and mental energy, and control of the senses.

8. Reference No. 15 & 16 : for self-punishment you may practise fasting for a day or a half day. Or you may increase the number of repetitions of your Mantra by one or two Malas.

9. The duration of practice must be increased gradually. Having increased the period for meditation, repetition of Mantra etc., you should not reduce the duration.

10. At the end of a month, take an accounting of your spiritual diary, and see your failures as well as your successes. Adopt more vigilance towards your defects for the next month. See that the errors are not repeated again and again.

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